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THE RED CROSS

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THE CANNES CONFERENCE

"To coöperate for the health of the world," the leading medical and nursing experts of the world met, beginning April 1, at Cannes, France, at the request of the Red Cross Societies of Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States. Members of the medical and nursing professions who attended this conference were as distinguished in their field as were the diplomats conferring at the peace table at Paris. France was represented by Dr. Roux, the discoverer of the diphtheria antitoxin; Dr. Laveran, discoverer of the malaria parasite; Dr. Calmette, of Lille, renowned for his fight against tuberculosis; Prof. Pinard and Dr. Risy, of Laennec Hospital; Doctors Armand Delille, Maurice Penu, and Leon Bernard, and Professors Courmont and Widai. Italy sent Bastinaelli, and Senator March Lafava, malaria experts; Dr. Golgi, a nerve specialist; Prof. Castellani, discoverer of the parasite which causes sleeping sickness. Sir Arthur Newsholme, Sir Ronald Ross, Sir Robert Phillip, Dr. Henry Kenwood, Dr. Ray Menzies, and Dr. Truby King, whose work has helped to make the New Zealand death-rate the lowest in the world, represented England, while Doctors Kabeshima and Nawa of the Japanese Army and Navy, represented that country.

The United States had good reason to feel proud of her delegates. Dr. William H. Welch presided over the meetings, and Dr. Emmet Holt was secretary of the executive committee. Other delegates were Henry Morgenthau, Col. Richard Strong, discoverer of the cause of trench fever and organizer of the conference; Doctors Wyckliffe Rose, Frederick Russell, Samuel M. Hamill, Lindsay Williams, Livingston Farrand, William F. Snow, Hugh S. Cumming, Herman M. Biggs, Fritz Talbot, William F. Lucas, and Albert H. Garvin. Julia C. Stimson, Chief Nurse of the American Expeditionary Forces, and Carrie M. Hall, Chief Nurse of the American Red Cross Commission to France were present, while Lillian D. Wald represented both the Red Cross Nursing Service and the Federal Children's Bureau.

The program of the conference, to quote Miss Wald,¹ really centered about the realization of Article XXV, of the covenant of the league, under which members of the league agree to encourage and promote the establishment and coöperation of duly authorized voluntary Red Cross national organizations, having for their purposes the improvement of health, the prevention of sickness, and the

¹ *The Survey*, May 31, 1919.

mitigation of suffering. It should be remembered that the Cannes Conference was a conference of experts, called by a committee of Red Cross Societies, and not a conference of the Red Cross Societies themselves, and its recommendations, therefore, are in the nature of the endorsement of a program which those experts already had sketched, with certain suggestions for immediate work.

Julia C. Stimson, Chairman of the Committee on Nursing of the Conference reports as follows:

Under the auspices of the Committee of Red Cross Societies, the following representatives of the nursing profession were invited by their respective national Red Cross Societies to attend the Conferences at Cannes in order to form a nursing committee: Miss A. W. Gill, Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh; Miss Lloyd Still, Matron of St. Thomas' Hospital, London; Carrie M. Hall, Chief Nurse, American Red Cross Commission to France (in the unavoidable absence of Miss Delano, then ill at Savenay); Professora Amelia Anselmi Maletesta, Secretary to the *Inspettrice Generale dele Infermiere Volonteria Croce Rossa Italiana* (SAR Duchessa d'Aosta); Contessa Nerina Gigliucci, Infermiere Volunteria, Croce Rossa Italiana, and Comtesse Roussy de Sales of the French Red Cross (Secours aux Blesses Militaires).

This Committee on Nursing made the following recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Conference:

The proposed Central International Red Cross Bureau should include a Nursing Department, the chief objects and purposes of which should be:

1. To act as an intelligence center, to collect, analyze, and distribute information regarding all matters pertaining to nursing and to women's work in Public Health, such as infant welfare, housing, social service, etc.
2. To undertake propaganda in countries where trained sick nursing and public health work are not at present fully developed.
3. To seek out in these countries (paragraph 2) suitable personnel for training both in sick and public health nursing and to advise and assist them to get the necessary training and to send them back to their own countries as pioneers.
4. To arrange for conferences of representative nurses and health workers from all countries for the interchange of ideas, etc.

PERMANENT RED CROSS ORGANIZATIONS

1. *International*: It is recommended that in connection with the proposed International Red Cross Bureau there be a section of the Department of Nursing, with a resident Secretary, who shall be a representative of the nursing profession.

2. *National*: It is recommended that in addition to their present duties, National Red Cross Organizations keep permanent registers of trained nurses available for any national or local emergency, and that they also keep registers of Red Cross workers, with data of their experience, for similar service.

In conclusion, we feel that many of the subjects which have been under discussion are very far-reaching, and must necessarily affect large groups of workers, and that therefore no decisions should be arrived at by a few individuals, but that these subjects should be referred to a larger and more representative body of professional women, and should preferably be considered after the Committee on Red Cross Societies has concluded its deliberations, and outlined the future activities of the International Committee, as it is desirable to know what fresh opportunities will be opened up for nurses and other health workers.

REORGANIZATION OF THE NURSING SERVICE IN FRANCE

Replacing the Red Cross Bureau of Nursing at Paris, which has hitherto supervised Red Cross nursing activities only in France, a Bureau of Nursing has recently been created to include all parts of Europe. This Bureau will make its headquarters at Paris, and through it, nurses will be supplied to all Red Cross Commissions to various European countries. The Director of this Bureau will act in an advisory capacity to Chief Nurses of such Units, and will receive reports from them. She will also continue to direct the nursing activities in France, and will hold in reserve a group of nurses who will be placed in institutions near Paris, with the understanding that they may be withdrawn for Red Cross work whenever the need for additional personnel arises.

Alice Fitzgerald, of Baltimore, Md., has been appointed Director of this Bureau, and is now responsible to the Red Cross Commissioner to Europe, and to the Department of Nursing, Washington, D. C. Born of American parentage in Italy, educated in France and Germany, Miss Fitzgerald came to the United States to take the nursing training at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. After her graduation, she was superintendent of the Training School for Nurses at Robert Long Hospital, of the University of Indiana, and at Wilkes Barre, Pa., City Hospital. She also helped reorganize the surgical service at Bellevue Hospital, New York City. She was sent to France in 1916 as the Edith Cavell Memorial Nurse, by a committee of prominent Bostonians. Upon the entry of the United States into the war, she asked to be transferred to the American Red Cross, and in May, 1918, was placed in charge of American Red Cross nurses serving with the French *Service de Sante*, in caring for American wounded in French hospitals. At one time, Miss Fitzgerald had over 130 Red Cross nurses and French-speaking aides, under her direction in this work.

After long and able service with the Red Cross Commission to France, Carrie M. Hall has resigned as Chief Nurse in that country. Miss Hall for some time directed the American Red Cross Nursing Service in England, and later succeeded Julia C. Stimson as Chief Nurse of the American Red Cross in France. Through the trying days of the summer and early fall, 1918, she labored with characteristic patience and sympathy in the interests of the Red Cross and the Army, looking after the countless details connected with the arrival and departure of hundreds of Red Cross nurses. Miss Hall left Paris, May 22, for Brest, and later for the United States.

RELEASE OF NURSES FROM MILITARY SERVICE

With the demobilization of the Army, and the Navy Nurse Corps, and with the release of nurses from Red Cross activities overseas, many American nurses are now gradually returning to their homes and former positions. At the signing of the armistice, there were 17,956 Red Cross nurses serving under the Army Nurse Corps; 8,849 have now been released from this service; there are still 9,107 reserve nurses in the Army Nurse Corps. In the Navy Nurse Corps, to which the Red Cross assigned 1,058, the total number released has been 425. Twenty-three have died; thirty have been transferred as regular members of the Navy Nurse Corps. Of the 284 Red Cross nurses assigned to the United States Public Health Service, 124 were on duty May 1st. Under the Red Cross, overseas, of 604 in service at the signing of the armistice, 281 have now been released.

American Red Cross nurses are now serving in the following countries: France, The Balkans, Serbia, Montenegro, Roumania, Greece, Italy, Russia, Palestine, England, Germany (with the Army of Occupation), Siberia. The larger number is still in France.

The Siberian Unit of 140 nurses is now complete, and all of this group have either sailed or are now waiting travel orders. Anna L. Tittman, a graduate of the Springfield Hospital Training School, Springfield, Illinois, with post-graduate work at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Bellevue, and with large experience as Inspector of Training Schools for Illinois, and who has also served at the Department of Nursing in the Red Cross Central Division, has been appointed Chief Nurse of the Red Cross Commission to Siberia, and sailed from San Francisco May 26.

THE RED CROSS BUREAU OF INFORMATION FOR NURSES

The Acting-Manager of the New York Bureau of Information for Nurses, Florence M. Johnson, reported on April 26, at the last meeting of the Joint National Committee, that 3,133 Army Nurses have been released from service through the New York port, and that 1,925 of this number have reported to the Bureau of Information. Many of the nurses who have not reported are New York nurses, and they have sent letters stating that they will report later; 268 nurses in Red Cross Service overseas and 6 Navy nurses have called or written to the Bureau. As it is felt that many nurses are not availing themselves of the opportunities offered by this Bureau, special effort has been made to advise Chief Nurses before leaving the ship that each of her unit must report to the Red Cross Atlantic Division, and from here they are directed to the Bureau of Information in the same building.

The Division of Public Health Nursing of the Bureau of Information reports that from March 10 to April 1, 38 organizations and 167 nurses registered there. Of the latter group, 36 per cent were high school graduates, 20 per cent had received a normal school or college education, 13 per cent had had only a grammar school education. Of this group of 167, which may be taken as typical of the personnel now coming through the Bureau of Information, 6 spoke French fluently; 27 others, somewhat; 6 spoke German fluently, 11 somewhat; 2 spoke Swedish fluently, 4 a little; others spoke Danish, Italian, Norwegian, Finnish, Welch.

Of this group of 167, all but 14 left the Bureau with some definite plan mapped out for their future work.

In order that the nurses may be interviewed with the least possible loss of time, the staff of this Bureau of Information has been increased. In talking to the nurses now returning, it has been observed that they seem especially interested in industrial nursing, although the majority of them are attracted by Public Health work of all types, and many have availed themselves of the scholarship and loan funds which the Red Cross has appropriated to equip nurses for this field.

One emergency call which the Bureau of Information met was to supply, on three days' notice, five nurses to prepare themselves for positions as industrial nurses in Boston.

The Division of Institutional and Student Assignment gives an exceedingly interesting report covering the same period of time.

Four hundred and ninety-seven nurses have applied for all types of institutional positions, ranging from superintendents of training schools to X-ray operators; 54 of these nurses have, during the twenty-one days of this report, accepted positions applied for through the Bureau.

On the other hand, requests have been received from institutions for 988 nurses, differing widely in their varied specialized fields; 79 nurses have accepted these positions, their names having been referred to the institutions by the Bureau, and the function of the Bureau of finding "jobs for nurses, and nurses for jobs" is now well under way.

RED CROSS TROUBADOURS OF HEALTH

Twenty-five Red Cross Nurses went out on the Chautauqua Circuits, approximately on June 1, and will speak to over 3,000 audiences, made up of small town and rural communities, in every State in the Union. A conference of these speakers was held at National Red Cross Headquarters, May 15-17.